Richard J. Colton

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Superintendent, Chemistry Division
Naval Research Laboratory

Dr. Colton was selected in August 2007 to serve as the Superintendent of the Chemistry Division at the US Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) in Washington, DC. In this capacity, he leads and directs a world-class research organization that conducts basic and applied research in the following areas of chemistry: chemical dynamics and diagnostics, materials chemistry, corrosion science and engineering, surface chemistry, and safety and survivability. He was acting in this position starting in December 2006 and was selected as a member of the Senior Executive Service in October 2007. Dr. Colton has served in the Federal government for 32 years.

As one of the Department of Defense's Advanced Research Scientists and Engineers (ARSAE) (equivalent to GS-16) at NRL, Dr. Colton had several assignments. From February 2005 until February 2008, he was the Director of NRL's Institute for Nanoscience where he directed multidisciplinary research programs that operate at the intersections of the fields of materials, electronics and biology in the nanometer size domain. He also managed an environmentally controlled research building and nanofabrication facility to provide the Navy and DOD with opportunities for advances in future Defense technology.

From September 2004 to October 2005, as a Supervisory Research Chemist and Branch Head, he directed a highly interdisciplinary research program in surface chemistry and physics in the Surface Chemistry Branch at NRL. The Branch had a staff of approximately 70 people including government employees, postdocs, contractors, visiting faculty, and students—the majority of whom hold PhD degrees in chemistry, physics, materials science, and engineering. Major research topics include surface science, nanoscience and technology, nanostructured and electronic materials, chemical dynamics, tribology and coatings, and chemical/biological sensors.

From October 1998 to September 2004, he was Head of the Surface Chemistry Branch (as described above) as a GS-15 Supervisory Research Chemist.